

Abstract 480

TITLE: An Integrated Model for Prevention with Active Substance Users

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ISSUE: The value of an HIV prevention model increases when it is possible to measure its impact on risk behaviors. Bronx AIDS Services has developed an integrated model that, during the duration of the program, has shown statistically significant results.

SETTING: The CDC-funded Prevention Education Program at Bronx AIDS Services targets active substance-using adults and their sexual partners in the borough of the Bronx in New York City. Program participants are identified as being in precontemplative or contemplative stages of change with respect to HIV-related behaviors. Individuals accepted into the program must have reported either sexual risk activities or IDU risk activities, and currently must not be receiving ongoing services from a service provider. Outreach and recruitment are conducted primarily around soup kitchens and in areas with high incidence of drug use.

PROJECT: This harm-reduction program is based on Prochaska and DiClemente's Stages of Change, and incorporates aspects of motivational interviewing into its 7-week, 21-session psycho-educational group sessions. The Freire-based, standardized curriculum developed specifically for this program includes a self-evaluation instrument, developed in each group, in order to quantify risk behaviors and set harm-reduction behavior change goals based on their own assessments. Using the Prochaska and DiClemente Stages of Change model, participants can also identify their own stages of change with respect to identified risk behaviors.

RESULTS: To date, the 54 participants have self-reported statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) short-term reductions in risk behaviors in the previous 30 days. Changes from intake to exit interviews reflect reductions in IDU (13% to 11%), unprotected oral sex (63% to 20%), unprotected vaginal sex (65% to 37%), unprotected anal sex (11% to 4%) and crack use (67% to 54%).

LESSONS LEARNED: BAS has seen that the integration of different models has produced measurable changes among the target population. The aspects of the different models that are seen as most important have to do with providing specific assessment and decision-making skills, as well as the social learning process from the group environment.

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